

CLAIMS

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1. A method for remotely metering electricity usage at a consumer site and providing metering and billing data, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving metering data from an electric meter, wherein said metering data is electronically transmitted from said electric meter;
calculating billing data using said metering data;
electronically storing said metering data and said billing data electronically; and
reporting said metering data and said billing data.

2. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of polling said meter using an electronic communication medium.

3. The method in accordance with claim 2 wherein said polling step polls said meter using a toll-free telephone line.

4. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said receiving step receives said metering data automatically transmitted from said meter.

5. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of receiving operational status of said meter.

6. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said receiving step receives metering data from said meter wherein said meter is suitably configured with a modem for connecting to an electronic data line.

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7. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said calculating step calculates said billing data using generation, transmission and distribution costs of electricity.

8. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said storing step stores said metering data and said billing data in a computer database.

9. The method in accordance with claim 1 wherein said reporting step further comprises the steps of:

providing a web site on the Internet;

retrieving said metering data and said billing data from said database;

and

presenting said metering data and said billing data on said web site.

10. A method for remotely metering electricity usage at a consumer site and providing metering and billing data, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving electricity usage information remotely from an electric meter;

calculating an electricity bill based on said usage information;

storing said usage information and said electricity bill; and

generating reports containing said usage information and electricity bill, wherein said reports are electronically accessible.

11. The method in accordance with claim 10 wherein said generating step further comprises the steps of:

providing a web site on the Internet;

requesting a consumer identification and a security code associated with said consumer identification on said web site;

verifying said consumer identification and said security code;

retrieving said metering data and said billing data from said database associated with said consumer identification; and

displaying said metering data and said billing data on said web site.

12. The method in accordance with claim 11 wherein said displaying step displays said metering data and said billing data in graphical and tabular formats.

1 13. The method in accordance with claim 11 further comprising the steps of:
2 providing an electronic payment option on said web site for making
3 payment electronically using electronic funds transfer; and
4 transferring funds electronically from a financial institution when said
5 electronic payment option is selected.

SUB A4 } 14. The method in accordance with claim 10 wherein said receiving step receives
said usage information from said electric method by polling said electric meter using an
electronic communication medium, wherein said electronic meter is configured with a
modem to connect to said communication medium.

15. The method in accordance with claim 10 wherein said storing step stores said
usage information and said billing data in a computer database.

1 16. The method of metering electricity usage in accordance with claim 10 further
2 comprising the steps of:

3 receiving water metering information from a water meter;
4 calculating an water bill based on said water metering information;
5 storing said water metering information in said database; and
6 generating reports contains said water metering and billing data.

SUB A5 } 17. A Metering and Billing Information Solution ("MBIS") system for remotely
2 metering electricity usage at a consumer site and for providing consumers with metering
3 information, billing information, and electronic payment options, the system comprising:

4 an electric meter for obtaining usage data on the amount of electricity
5 delivered to said consumer site and transmitting said usage data;
6 receiving means for receiving said usage data transmitted by said
7 electric meter;
8 calculating means for calculating an electricity bill for the amount of
9 electricity used based on said usage data;
10 a computer database for storing said usage data and said electricity bill;
11 data retrieval means for retrieving said usage data and said electricity
12 bill stored on said computer database; and
13 user interface means for presenting said usage data and said electricity
14 bill to consumers.

18. The system in accordance with claim 17 wherein said electric meter is configured with a modem for transmitting said data on an electronic data line.

19. The system in accordance with claim 17 wherein said user interface means further comprises a web site on the Internet for interactively providing said usage data and said electricity bill to consumers.

20. The system in accordance with claim 19 wherein said web site is configured with an electronic funds transfers means for electronically transferring funds from a financial institution.

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